

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) EXTENDS COMMENT PERIOD ON THE DRAFT EXPLANATION OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES (ESD) FOR TEMPORARY STORAGE OF CONTAMINATED SEDIMENT IN "CELL #1" AT ITS SAWYER STREET FACILITY

EPA is extending the time period in which to receive public comment regarding the continued temporary storage of contaminated sediment in a lined containment cell at its Sawyer Street facility in New Bedford, MA. Specifically, EPA is seeking comment on a waiver of a Massachusetts Hazardous Waste Regulations requirement that the containment cell have a double liner rather than the single liner that presently exists. EPA believes that the existing single liner, in combination with site conditions and facility monitoring, has been and will continue to be equally protective as a double liner for the temporary storage of these sediments.

Since August 2000, cell #1 has temporarily stored contaminated sediment from various upper and lower harbor cleanups, and is currently capped with clean material. Groundwater and air monitoring around the perimeter of the facility continues to show that no contamination is migrating from the area.

Cell #1 was most recently used to temporarily store sediments removed from the Aerovox shoreline area in 2008. Portland cement was added to stabilize the sediments prior to storage in the cell. In addition to having high PCB levels (but on average below 4,000 ppm), these sediments contain high levels of trichloroethylene (TCE). The TCE levels are such that the sediments are classified as hazardous waste, which is regulated under different federal and state regulations than PCB waste.

Due to the new bottom liner and overall site monitoring, EPA has determined that cell #1 is suitable for continued temporary storage of PCB and TCE-contaminated sediments, and such storage does not pose an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment. Through this ESD, cell #1 is only being authorized to serve as a temporary storage facility; a final disposal alternative will be developed in a future decision document.

A 30 day comment period is now in effect for submittal of written comments to EPA from September 1, 2009 to September 30, 2009. Comments should be submitted in writing, postmarked by the deadline date, to:

Elaine Stanley, Remedial Project Manager
U.S. EPA – Region 1
One Congress Street
Suite 1100 (HBO)
Boston, MA 02114

or sent via e-mail by the deadline date to: NBH_Comments@epa.gov. Comments received will be addressed in the final ESD to be issued after the end of the comment period.

This ESD and other site information can be found in the Administrative Record located at:

EPA's Region I Records Center
One Congress Street, Suite 1100
Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2023
Monday thru Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The New Bedford Free Library
(Reference Department)
613 Pleasant Street
New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740.

As well as on our website at: www.epa.gov/ne/nbh

For questions and clarification about this ESD or the cleanup efforts, please join the cleanup team at our Sawyer Street trailer facility for an informal Q & A session to be held at 7:00 p.m., Thursday evening of September 24th.